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# *Forest and Flame in the*



**Bible**





*Temple for men and a haven for animals*

# Foreword - - -

There are many passages in the Bible that tell how our forests serve us and how we should protect them. Forests provide the raw materials for countless products needed in modern living. They conserve water supplies, regulate stream flow, reduce floods and erosion. The life-giving role of water is linked to the forest in unmistakable terms.

The Bible urges us to the protection and wise use of our forests, range, and woodlands. Yet, today, most of the forest fires in our country are caused by our own carelessness and willfulness. As the Bible foretells, destruction of our natural resources will bring us punishment in the form of loss and misery. With proper management and protection our forests can produce continuous crops of timber and forage, safeguard the watersheds, and provide recreation and wildlife. The forest can yield all these year after year for the welfare of our people and the security of our Nation.

In this booklet are selected Biblical passages of great wisdom and beauty. They have been reviewed and approved for this purpose by religious leaders representing the Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish faiths. They contain inspiration for discussions in our Sunday Schools, Bible Classes, and homes.

Forest and Flame in the Bible was adapted by George Vitas. It includes material previously published in "Forests and Forest Devastation in the Bible," a publication of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service; and "Trees and the Bible," a publication of the Texas Forest Service.

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*Forest*



# and Flame in the Bible

## **MAN AWAKENED TO LIFE EMBOWERED IN A GARDEN OF TREES**

*Genesis 2:8-9*

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.”

## **HE FOUND THE FOREST A PLACE OF BEAUTY AND A SANCTUARY**

*Isaiah 60:13*

“The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious.”

*Psalms 29:9*

“The voice of the Lord . . . discovereth the forests; and in his temple doth every one speak of *his* glory.”



## IT HARBORS CREATURES OF THE WILD; IT IS THEIR HOME

*Ezekiel 31:6*

“All the fowls of heaven made their nests in his boughs, and under his branches did all beasts of the field bring forth their young, . . .”

*Psalms 104:16-17*

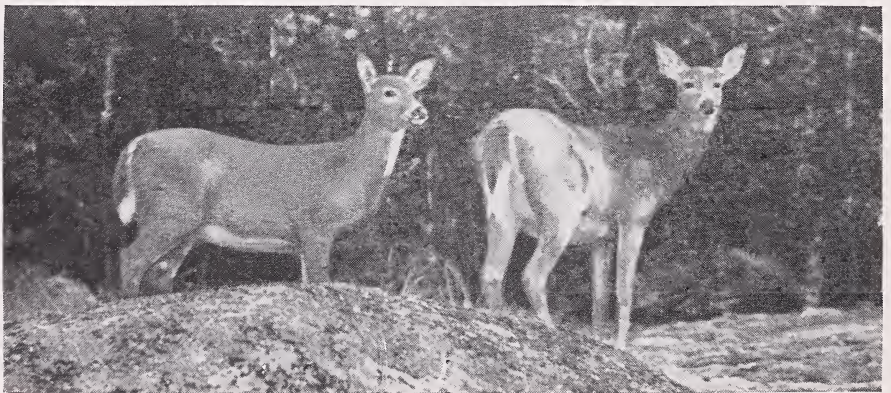
“The trees of the Lord are full of *sap*; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted; Where the birds make their nests: *as for* the stork, the fir trees *are* her house.”

*Psalms 104:12*

“By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, *which* sing among the branches.”

*Psalms 104:20*

“Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep *forth*.”







## **IT MOTHERS THE RIVER WHICH NOURISHES THE SOIL**

*Genesis 2:10*

“And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.”

*Job 14:8-9*

“Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; *Yet* through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.”

## **IT IS A CREATION OF GOD AND HIS PRESENCE IS EVERYWHERE**

*Isaiah 14:7-8*

“The whole earth is at rest, *and* is quiet; they break forth into singing. Yea, the fir trees rejoice at Thee, *and* the cedars of Lebanon, . . .”

*Ezekiel 17:24*

“And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, . . .”

*I Chronicles 16:33*

“. . . the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the Lord, . . .”

(Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the Lord, because he cometh to judge the earth.)

*Psalms 148:7*

“Praise the Lord from the earth, . . .”

*Psalms 148:9*

“Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars:”

**SO PROTECT THE BOUNTY OF THE EARTH,  
FOR NATURE IS THE WORK OF GOD**

*Joel 1:7*

“He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast *it* away; the branches thereof are made white.”

*Revelation 9:4*

“And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; . . .”



**AND KEEP FIRE FROM THE TREES,  
HOWEVER SMALL THE FLAME**

*James 3:5*

“. . . Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!”

*Psalms 83:14*

“As the fire burneth a wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire;”

*James 3:6*

“. . . and setteth on fire the course of nature, . . .”

*Isaiah 10:18–19*

“And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, . . . And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may write them.”



## FOR FIRE CAN DESTROY ALL THAT GROWS

*Joel 2:3*

“A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: . . . behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.”

## IT CAN PLAGUE FOREST AND FIELD; MAN AND ANIMAL

*Joel 1:18-19*

“How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. O Lord, to thee will I cry: for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field.”

## IT CAN DRY THE RIVER

*Joel 1:20*

“The beasts of the field cry also unto thee: for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.”

(In using fire to symbolize a terrible plague of locusts, Joel presents an eloquent description of the effect of fire on the land and all living things.)







## IT CAN LAY BARE THE FIELD AND MOUNTAIN

*Deuteronomy 4:11*

“And ye came near and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness.”

*Isaiah 5:24*

“Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossoms shall go up as dust: . . .”



## AND AS IN PUNISHMENT FOR EVIL DOING, FIRE LEVIES A FEARFUL TOLL

*Ezekiel 20:47*

“. . . Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree: the flaming flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from the south to the north shall be burned therein.”



*Isaiah 9:18*

“For wickedness burneth as the fire: it shall devour the briers and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest, and they shall mount up *like* the lifting up of smoke.”

**AND MAN REALIZING HIS  
LOSS, MUST SET OUT TO  
CLOTHE THE LAND WITH  
TREES**



*Ezekiel 17:22*

“Thus saith the Lord God; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set *it*; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant *it* upon an high mountain and eminent:”

*Leviticus 19:23*

“And when ye shall come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees for food, then ye shall count the fruit thereof . . .”

*Genesis 21:33*

“And *Abraham* planted a grove in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the Lord, . . .”

## AND THOSE WHO SET FIRES WILL BE CALLED UPON TO MAKE AMENDS TO THOSE WHO HAVE SUFFERED

*Exodus 22:6*

“If a fire break out, and catch in thorns, so that the stacks of corn, or the standing corn, or the field, be consumed *therewith*; he that kindled the fire shall surely make restitution.”



## FOR THE RESOURCES OF NATURE ARE MAN'S LIFE

*Deuteronomy 20:19*

“... (for the tree of the field *is* man's life) ...”

## SO SPARE THE EARTH AND THE TREES

*I Chronicles 16:33*

“Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the Lord, ...”

*Deuteronomy 20:19*

“When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an axe against them: for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down ... to employ *them* in the siege:”



**AND IF A TREE BE CUT OR BURNED,  
GROW OTHERS IN ITS STEAD**

*Isaiah 44:14*

“He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish *it*.”

*Job 14:7*

“For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.”

**AND FROM THE EARTH WILL  
SPRING THE TREE ONCE MORE!**

*Genesis 1:11*

“And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, . . . *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.”

*Revelation 22:1*

“And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.”

*Revelation 22:2*

“In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.”

*Genesis 1:12*

“. . . and God saw that *it was* good.”

...and please make  
people careful, amen



*Remember - Only you can*  
**PREVENT FOREST FIRES!**

**YES . . .** Most forest fires can be prevented if you will follow these rules:

- 1. CRUSH OUT YOUR SMOKES—BREAK YOUR MATCH IN TWO—DROWN YOUR CAMP AND WARMING FIRE.** Be sure that every spark is dead out.
- 2. USE CARE IN BURNING BRUSH OR TRASH—NEVER BURN LAND OF OTHERS.** Respect your neighbor's property rights.

Yes, care will prevent many fires from starting. Fires which are deliberately set on lands of others should be brought to the attention of law-enforcement officers.